

## REFERENCE

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PEARL-BREASTED SWALLOW *HIRUNDO DIMIDIATA* IN SOUTHWESTERN  
TANZANIA AND NORTHEASTERN ZAMBIA

Moyer (1983) gives a record of the Pearl-breasted Swallow from southwestern Tanzania at 8.30S, 31.40E in 1980, and comments that the only other East African record is from Malangali, also in Tanzania at 8.25S, 33.50E; he also mentions a record of this swallow at Kasama, Zambia (10.10S, 31.10E), 160 km to the south of his locality, but he provides no other evidence of the bird's occurrence in the Zambia/Tanzania border area.

The single record quoted for NE Zambia does not accurately reflect this species' status and range in the area. The race *marwitzi* (type locality Malangali, Tanzania) of the Pearl-breasted Swallow is apparently resident in Zambia and is associated with miombo woodland, occurring over clearings and at woodland edges, but is also found over swampy ground; it is widespread but normally rather sparse (Benson et al. 1971).

In May 1976 C.A. Taylor and I encountered this species in small numbers at the edge of miombo woodland in Mbala District, Zambia, between 8.40S, 31.25E and 9.00S, 31.25E, some 35 to 60 km southwest of Moyer's locality at Lake Sundu, Tanzania. Between 1975 and 1981 the *Zambian Ornithological Society Newsletters* also gave several records of this swallow from infrequently watched areas of NE Zambia, including Isoka District (approximately 10.00S, 32.40E) and Kasama District. These records suggest that the Pearl-breasted Swallow may be widespread in NE Zambia up to the Tanzanian border, and it is therefore likely that the bird is present in miombo woodland from the border north and east, at least to the two known Tanzanian localities. Its status in SW Tanzania is unlikely to differ from that in NE Zambia if the habitat is similar, and it is undoubtedly more widespread and frequent than the present Tanzanian records suggest.

## REFERENCE

MOYER, D.C. 1983. A record of the Pearl-breasted Swallow *Hirundo dimidiata* from Lake Sundu in southwestern Tanzania. *Scopus* 7: 51.

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A LEUCISTIC COMMON BULBUL *PYCNONOTUS BARBATUS*

On 19 June 1983, while collecting data for the Kenya bird atlas (Lewis & Pomeroy in prep.), F.A.D., G.M. and P.R.A. Davey and myself observed a leucistic Common Bulbul *Pycnonotus barbatus tricolor*. This was on Kiboko Estate (1.06S, 37.18E), near Thika, Kenya, and the bird had been seen in the vicinity for several months (F.A.D. Davey pers. comm.).

It was pure white except for a pale yellow vent and dark soft parts, and

specific identification was based upon its size, structure, vent colour and crested head.

Britton (1969) recorded the incidence of albinism in the ornithological collection of the National Museum, Nairobi, and in the birds that he had handled during netting (primarily for ringing) in Kenya. He noted that Common Bulbuls show a higher incidence of partial/total albinism than the other species he examined, and this point is supported by Mackworth-Praed & Grant (1960) and McLachlan & Liversidge (1978), who mention the phenomenon in this species.

Three leucistic Common Bulbuls from Kenya in the collection of the National Museum, Nairobi, show lesser development of albinism than the Thika bird and, in over nine years of familiarity with this species in several countries, I have never seen it display pigment loss so strikingly.

#### ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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#### EASTERN-BEARDED SCRUB ROBIN *CERCOTRICHAS QUADRIVIRGATA* BATHING IN A TREE HOLE

During the early morning of 19 December 1982 I was sitting in the Pugu Hills forest near Dar es Salaam observing territorial behaviour of the East Coast Akalat *Sheppardia gunningi*.

During a lull in akalat activity I was attracted to a fluttering movement some 20 m from where I sat. Careful positioning gave me excellent views of an Eastern Bearded Scrub Robin sitting at the entrance to a hole about a metre above the ground in the bole of a small tree. The bird fluffed out its breast feathers, spread its wings as far as practical and lowered itself backwards into the hole. While this was suggestive of brooding, I was surprised at the choice of nest site and even more puzzled when, after a minute or two, it jumped out on to the lip of the hole. It immediately began shaking and preening before again returning backwards into the hole. Using binoculars and with an increase in ambient light, I could make out quite energetic movements inside the hole. Within a minute or two it again jumped to the lip of the hole and continued preening. I was convinced that the bird had not seen me and its behaviour was completely natural. This was confirmed when the akalat returned and my movement disturbed the scrub robin, which flew away giving its alarm note.

An inspection of the hole several minutes later revealed it to be a rot hole with a distinct lower lip. Water had collected in the hole and was evidently being used for bathing.